

THE LEISURE HOUR.

BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,
AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND.—*Cowper.*



OLD HAUNTS.

IDONEA.

BY ANNE DEALE, AUTHOR OF "THE PENNANT FAMILY," ETC.

CHAPTER XLV.

Oh that those lips had language! Life has passed
With me but roughly since I heard thee last.

—*Cowper.*

NEVILLE sat ruminating until midnight after the good housekeeper had taken his newly-found sister to her old bedroom. His work was

accomplished in a way he little expected, and he could not realise that the long-lost Clarina was actually in the house. Neither could he understand his own position as regarded her. Of course he was thankful to the Almighty for bringing so marvellous an event to pass, but knowing nothing of her history beyond what he had heard from others he felt nervous as to what was yet to evolve. It must be confessed that he would rather that his sister should have returned to him Clarina Fairborn than Madame Ronda with

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PRICE ONE PENNY.

two children who were more Italian than English. He, a confirmed bachelor, did not rejoice in his heart at the exact manner in which his desires were fulfilled; for he liked his ease and solitude, was not particularly fond of children, and, in spite of his philanthropy, wished to have everything his own way. Still, he must have those melancholy-looking little girls at Heronshill, and consider them as his nieces, whether their father was an itinerant organ-grinder or what not. He came to the conclusion that for the sake of Clarina, who was still an invalid, it would be better to avoid all recurrence to her past history for a few days, and leave the children where they were, until she volunteered to speak of them. It must be remembered that he had not been made acquainted with the fourth act of the play ending in the disruption of Charlotte's marriage, nor with the suspicion entertained by Percy and Idonea that Madame Ronda was the wife of Sir Richard Dyke. This much he knew, however, that instead of discovering Clarina on the boards of some minor theatre, or in a London refuge, as he had expected, she had come back to her home to all appearance respectable if poor. But the more he pondered, the stranger seemed the circumstances which had brought them together, and the greater the difficulty of accounting for them.

"It is all like the fog in which I picked her up," he said, half aloud. "But that she has come home again should be, and is, a matter of thankfulness."

As he rose, at length, to go to bed, he suddenly faced his father's portrait, which he had himself hung in the library. It seemed to smile upon him, and if any regretful thought mingled with his joys, that look dispersed it.

He had not much sleep that night, neither had Clarina. Heatherton greeted him in the morning with the news that her "sweet bird" was so excited that she could not rest. Still, she had persuaded her to breakfast in her room.

"She looks just like her old self," said the faithful housekeeper. "She has been talking of you, Master Neville, and the old times and the old people, till we are both beside ourselves. What shall I say to her from you?"

"Say? why, say—" stammered Neville, whose messages to ladies had been rare.

"Shall I give her your love, Master Neville, and tell her that you are longing to see her?"

"Yes, Heatherton; say whatever you like—everything that is kind and—brotherly."

No sooner had Heatherton departed than he accused himself of coldness, and wished he were not such a shy, undemonstrative fellow. After breakfast he sat down to his books, but found that he could not apply himself. He first looked at his white Graces, then at the white world outside his library. There was a thaw, and the depth of snow had considerably diminished during the night. The robins were actually chirping amongst the creepers beneath the verandah, and the sun had put on a bold front, and dispersed both snow and clouds. He longed to go out, but he waited for Clarina.

She came before he expected her. Encouraged by his message, she had dressed quickly, and hurried downstairs, preceded by Heatherton.

"The dear heart is coming, Master Neville. You will welcome her for the old master's sake," whispered the housekeeper, entering at one door and going out by another.

Clarina came in, a bright flush on her pale face, her hands extended nervously. Neville was standing in the bow window, watching the robins. He turned and saw, as he fancied, the Clarina of his boyhood, for Heatherton had braided her glossy black locks, and even persuaded her to replace her shabby collar and sleeves by some she had left behind her years ago. She paused as she entered, and her eyes fell on her father's picture.

"I believe the robins know you are come home, Clarina, for they are chirping and waiting to be fed just as they used to do when you brought in their crumbs and disturbed my lessons and Umfreville's equanimity."

These simple words, and the sight of her father's picture, did more to reassure Clarina than the most elaborate welcome could have done. She joined her brother, put her hand in his, and stood by him in mute agitation, apparently watching the robins. Neither spoke for some minutes. Neville was the first to break the silence.

"Let us feed them, Clarina, as when we were boy and girl," he said, averting his eyes, which were full of tears, from hers, that were brimming over.

"God bless you, brother; but not now—not now," she said.

As the snow was melting in the sunshine, and the redbreasts were singing in their new joy, so did the frosts melt and rosy hues appear in the hearts of the brother and sister.

While they stood thus, hand in hand, searching their hearts for words and finding none, Mr. Umfreville was announced. Before they could recover themselves sufficiently to turn round, Percy entered and saw them together. There, in the old library, where years ago he had taught the reserved boy and reasoned with the wilful, wild girl, he found them—the one a man in his prime, shy and reserved still, but worthy of honour; the other—well, he knew not what she was, but she was still Clarina. Intervening years vanished, and he saw her as he used to see her—tall, graceful, dark-haired, looking through the window and coaxing the birds. He stood as if planted in the middle of the room, silent and motionless, until Neville came towards him and said, with an emotion that belied his words, "Now it is perfect. We were talking of feeding the robins. Thanks to you and Idonea, Clarina has come home."

In another moment Clarina's hands were clasped in Percy's, and the dream became reality, though the wild, mischievous eyes were dimmed with tears, and the raven locks were interwoven with threads of silver.

"I—we—thought we had lost you," stammered Percy.

"I came to prove your words, and I find him all you said," she returned, with a grateful look at her brother.

Neville, who was really the least self-possessed of the trio, yet who had great self-command, broke up the sentiment and tenderness of the reunion by asking what had brought Percy to the North.

"Idonea fancied that I needed rest, and wrote to Mr. Somerville, and—here I am," he replied.

But no efforts could give the natural tone to the broken conversation that ensued. Neither Neville nor Percy ventured to allude to Clarina's past history, and she had not the courage to relate it. Indeed, each felt that the attempt would be almost impossible for her after the previous illness, travel,

and excitement, so they made that most painful of all efforts—the effort to talk of indifferent subjects when one of paramount interest is nearest the heart.

Most people owe a debt of gratitude to a luncheon-bell. They realised theirs for the first time; it interrupted the attempt to force conversation, which is never properly an exotic, but a natural garden flower. Neville afterwards declared that the sound of that bell was sweet as a silver trumpet in his ears.

“Luncheon!” he exclaimed. “Umfreville, you must take in Clarina in state. Heatherton says she has eaten no breakfast, and must be fed up.”

Percy did as he was bid, and led her to the top of the table in the good-sized dining-room.

“I—I—would rather not sit there,” she said, a vision of her stepmother presenting itself.

“Better come nearer me and the fire,” suggested Neville, whose perception of the feelings of others was intuitive. “I always sit with my back to the fire. Selfish as ever, Clarina—so selfish, indeed, that I scarcely know how to behave as master of my own house. You must begin by teaching me manners. Let us move up the plates and dishes ourselves, for I hate a man in the room, staring at every mouthful I eat, as if he were counting the time between it and the next. Heatherton knows my weakness, and humours me. You and I must fight it out as we used to do, Clarina.”

“Then I shall certainly have the best of it—I always had,” she said, a gleam of animation and mild perceptibility in her eyes for the first time.

“The very best thing that could happen to him,” said Percy, his face lighting up at sight of the familiar smile. “Heatherton here, and Mrs. Keene in London, would let him have his own way in everything.”

“I suppose that is why he does not marry?” suggested Clarina.

“No. My experience of matrimony keeps me a bachelor,” returned Neville, an allusion that somehow put out the temporary light in Clarina’s face. “And now,” he added, “I shall never want a wife, for you will be sister and wife in one.”

Percy watched the flush of pleasure that these kind words kindled suffuse Clarina’s pale cheeks and slowly disappear.

In vain they pressed her to eat. She could not swallow for the emotions produced by every casual word. In spite of Neville’s thoughtfulness and Percy’s anxiety, the fact that the one was on one side, the other opposite, watching her, and avoiding every allusion to the past, affected her more than reproaches or questions could have done.

After luncheon Neville took Percy out, ostensibly to see his old haunts, really to speak of Clarina. She meanwhile wandered from room to room, as if through a maze. Nothing was changed since she had left her home over fifteen years ago. Furniture, pictures, ornaments, were in the same places, and it seemed as if, like the Sleeping Beauty, she had fallen asleep and been awakened. Everything was as clean, orderly, and precise as the worthy housekeeper who superintended it. Had she arrived a few weeks before, she would have found all, as Heatherton expressed it, topsy-turvy; but each displaced article had been readjusted, and formality reigned where freedom had taken a short-lived possession. It was a relief to her return to the library, where the still life of books and papers, and her brother’s scattered possessions, spoke at least of this world.

She stood before her father’s picture, and the tears she had been restraining all the morning poured down. She was overpowered by remorse for having left him; grief for her proud self-will, regret that she had not sought to soften her stepmother’s dislike, and humble penitence for her many faults. It was no longer Madame Ronda, stern in poverty, but Clarina, subdued by love. She might have been a statue placed before a picture, she was so pale and still. A tall, thin, graceful woman, with hands clasped, dark eyes upturned, black, glossy hair braided over a small head, a large white collar on a dress of rusty black, and a face white as a first snow-drop. And while she stood thus absorbed, a sunbeam touched her father’s picture tenderly, and gleamed through the big tears that hung upon her cheeks, as if that father forgave his repentant child, while the Angel of Pity gathered the shining drops into her golden chalice.

CHAPTER XLVI.

If she should come to me from far away,
How would she come? Should I upon some night
Wake suddenly, and see a mystic light
Enshrining face and form, what would she say?

—Philip Bourke Marston.

WHILE Clarina was standing before her father’s picture, mutely asking forgiveness and receiving it from those dead lips, her brother and friend were pacing the snow-strewn drive, and conversing of her. Percy had told Neville of the discovery of Sir Richard Dyke’s marriage, and of Idonea’s suspicions that Clarina was the forsaken wife.

“I had rather she was the wife or widow of Ronda, professional singer, or even organ-grinder,” said the latter, sardonically. “But at any rate, I must know before I receive the children. Little Rondas might be endurable, but not little Dykes. Yet her eyes seem to be looking grievously into the past, rather than excitedly into the present or future. How changed she is.”

“Yes. For the better I hope,” returned Percy, dreamily, taking a letter from his pocket.

It was one that had been enclosed for him in his mother’s letter from Idonea. It was written from Boulogne, where Mrs. Dooner and her party had remained a night, and contained news of Charlotte. Idonea wrote of her with terror, as almost insane. During their journeys she had not spoken to any one, but as soon as they stopped, first at Folkestone, then at Boulogne, her excitement became as serious as her silence had been. She could not bear the presence of Idonea, who was obliged to keep as much as possible out of her sight. Nothing more had transpired concerning Sir Richard Dyke or his wife.

“Mr. Dooner has accompanied us thus far,” wrote Idonea, “and from his unusually severe face, and resolute manner, I think he will not spare the man who has wrecked poor Miss Charlotte’s peace. I scarcely know what will become of me, for it is evident that she will not have me near her, and Lina will not hear of my leaving her. And I can honestly say that I only tried to do my duty by the family and Madame Ronda. I begin to wish I had never left home, even though I have been instrumental in preventing a grievous wrong. After all, poverty with one’s own dear ones, is preferable to riches amongst strangers. I now write in solitude in a foreign land, and almost dread new scenes, not knowing how Miss Charlotte will treat me. The others are kind, though

they evidently wish me at the antipodes—all but Lina and Mr. Dooner."

Percy placed Idonea's letter in Neville's hand, who read it through twice, without comment, and returned it.

"What do you think of it?" asked Percy.

"That the Dooners, like the rest of us, reap as they have sown. They made a dead set at Dyke, and he is a reckless man. Why don't you get your sister away from that mad Ophelia? Jealous women did wicked deeds of old, and, to judge from the police reports, they are not improved in this nineteenth century."

"But Idonea has a will of her own, and we are poor."

"It seems that all women have wills of their own; one's sisters especially. One expects it in a wife, but not in a sister. I suppose we must leave ours alone; at any rate I must, until she voluntarily confides in me; but Miss Umfreville is young, and peculiarly placed."

"I am satisfied that Mr. Dooner will act as a father by her," said Percy.

"I dare say he will," growled Neville. "And I must act the paternal part by Clarina, which will be to hunt that scoundrel Dyke to the ends of the earth, if he is her husband and the father of those melancholy little girls."

"It was poverty made them melancholy. They were bright enough when with other children," said Percy.

"Still I humbly hope they are not my nieces."

"And you a philanthropist!"

Neville shrugged his shoulders and Percy laughed, as much as to say that philanthropy is excellent when it has not to be exercised upon one's own kith and kin, and that few, if any, are philanthropic to their own poor relations. They continued to discuss Clarina and all that Percy knew of her, either by personal contact or through Mrs. Keene, until they became more puzzled by the end than the beginning.

"She has come home, and that ought to be enough for the present. We shall know the rest by-and-by," said Neville, at last. "I hope we shall get used to one another, for under all circumstances she must live here, whether as widow of the Ronda, or wife of that—" Here he suppressed an epithet, and added, "Let us rejoin her. I wish your mother would come and see her. I feel at a loss what to do or say. It is lucky that we have Heatherton."

When they entered the library, Clarina was not there. She and the sunbeam had withdrawn together, the one to weep out her grief and repentance in solitude, the other to cheer some other lonely heart. To Percy, at least, the room looked barren. He had been accustomed to associate it, both in imagination and memory, with Clarina; and having returned and found her there, it seemed cold and cheerless without her. He pressed down a longing to wish her good-bye, and even to ask her confidence, and spoke to Neville again concerning her. Perceiving that he was in no mood for reasoning, he asked for his horse, and soon took his leave.

As he rode away, he turned to give Neville a parting nod, and glancing at a well-remembered window saw Clarina gazing out. She was appar-

ently looking far away up the snow-clad Cheviots, and he sighed as he thought of the old rides amongst those breezy hills.

It was dark when he reached home, and his mother and the children were anxiously expecting him. The warm greeting did him good, and tea and fire cheered him.

When his brothers and sisters had gone to bed, and he and his mother were alone, he told her of Clarina's return home, and gave her as much of her history as he considered prudent.

Mrs. Umfreville's astonishment may be imagined.

"Found! returned after all these years! A teacher of music! A singer! A foreigner! In extreme poverty, and discovered by you and Idonea! You, who were ordered to leave the house on her account! Mr. Fairborn has asked me to go and see her! Why, I could not countenance in her what I should reprobate in my own girls."

As Mrs. Umfreville made these exclamations, her son groaned in spirit, but he knew his mother too well to combat them. He knew also that Clarina had laid herself open to every species of misapprehension and reprobation, and no one could grieve for her more deeply than he did, but he knew the provocations she had received, and pitied while he blamed her with that pity which had once been "akin to love," and now was akin to sorrow.

He and his mother sat discussing this strange story until midnight. Her piercing eyes and acute though prejudiced mind had read his heart years ago, and now she trembled for the result of this discovery.

"She is married, you say?" she asked.

"We suppose so. She called herself madame," he replied.

"Does she wear a wedding-ring?"

"It never occurred to me to look."

Mrs. Umfreville, by a not unnatural transition, thought of her own daughter, and spoke abruptly of her.

"You must fetch Idonea home. I wish I had never consented to her leaving me. She cannot remain with Miss Charlotte Dooner."

"Dear mother! such a journey, and such an expense! Besides, they are probably in Paris, or some more remote spot, by this time. I should not know where to find her."

"And we have let her go abroad alone with those people, who are comparative strangers. My instincts were against it from the first. Why must one sacrifice one's principles for money? Better keep them and starve."

"That is what the men on strike say, mother. But these little ones, what have they done? While man's pride resists, the children starve."

Unintentionally Percy pierced his mother's soul.

"You and Idonea would have me humble myself before every purse-proud plebeian," she said, haughtily.

"No, dear mother; but I suppose we must take the world as it is, and it changes every seven years like the fashions. Idonea is struggling bravely, and all who strive conscientiously are guided by the Divine Hand."

Mrs. Umfreville was silent, for she believed at heart that her son spoke the truth.



DEATH AND ITS SUPERSTITIONS.

A PART from the resurrection, one of the most powerful arguments, perhaps, for the immortality of the soul is to be found in the universal superstition connected with death from the very earliest period. This can only be accounted for from the fact that there is implanted within man a powerful instinct of his immortality, which forbids him to look upon death as the final consummation of his being. Hence it is that he associates with death a certain dread, not only on account of its awful mysteriousness, but owing to its being the crisis of an entirely new phase of the soul's existence. However apparently powerful to some may seem the weapons of modern infidelity employed in assailing the soul's immortality, these have never yet been able to explain how it is that the doctrine of the soul's existence after death has not only been the subject of belief in all ages, but amidst the lowest savages and most uncivilised tribes of the world. This statement, too, is happily beyond contradiction. We have only to consult the histories, both past and present, of heathen tribes, to learn that it is a well authenticated and established fact. Mr. Tylor, in his "Primitive Culture" (1871, ii. 19), says: "Looking at the religion of the lower races as a whole, we shall at least not be ill-advised in taking as one of its general and principal elements the doctrine of the soul's future life." The question, therefore, naturally arises, When originated this feeling within man that death does not rob him of his life? Although, as in the case of some of the rude tribes, he may have somewhat distorted notions in this matter, believing occasionally either in the soul's re-birth in another place, or its transference to animals and plants. The only satisfactory and, indeed, intelligent answer to this question is that this feeling has been divinely implanted within man. Hence, in spite of all his uncivilisation and ignorance, man justly refuses to see in death his destruction, and so he invests it with that superstition which its mystic nature suggests.

One very curious notion which we find in this and foreign countries relates to the exit of the soul from the body at death, it being supposed that the departure of life is delayed so long as any locks or bolts in the house are fastened. It is, therefore, a common practice, when a person is at the point of death, to open every door in the house, so that the soul may not be hindered in taking its leave of the body. A reference to this idea occurs in "Guy Mannering," where it is said "the popular belief that the protracted struggle between life and death is painfully prolonged by keeping the door of the apartment shut was received as certain by the superstitious eld of Scotland." A correspondent of "Notes and Queries" mentions the following incident, which is an interesting instance of this curious superstition. He tells us that he had for a long time visited a poor man who was dying of a very painful disease, and was daily expecting his death. Upon calling one morning to see his poor friend, his wife informed him that she thought he would have died during the night,

and, consequently, she and her friends unfastened every lock in the house. On inquiring the reason, he was informed that any hole or lock fastened was supposed to cause uneasiness to, and hinder the departure of, the soul. This is a common superstition in France and Germany, and exists even among the Chinese, who make a hole in the roof to let out the soul at death. This practice originated in the conception of the soul as being something material and substantial. Indeed, even to this day, a German peasant considers it wrong to slam a door for fear of accidentally pinching a soul in it. In some parts of Holland, when a child is dying, persons shade it from the parents' gaze with their hands, the soul being believed to linger in the body as long as a loving sympathetic eye is fixed upon it. In Germany there is a notion that if any one who sheds tears over an expiring friend does but wipe them off he enhances the difficulty of death's last struggle.

Another very common superstition is that death announces its approach by certain mysterious noises. These, too, it is said, are sometimes caused by the dying persons themselves, who make known their departure to their friends in such strange sounds. Countless instances are on record of such supposed forebodings of death. Occasionally, too, we even hear of the credulous actually looking for them, believing strongly in their reality. A curious example of this species of folk-lore is, perhaps, still in the memory of some of our readers, namely, that in connection with the death of Mr. Smith, the eminent Assyriologist. This famous scholar died at Aleppo, on the 19th of August, 1876, at or about the hour of six in the afternoon. On the same day, and between three-quarters of an hour and an hour later, a friend and fellow-worker of Mr. Smith's—Dr. Delitzsch—was passing within a stone's throw of the house in which Mr. Smith lived whilst in London, when he suddenly heard his own name uttered aloud in a "most piercing cry," which, says the "Daily News" (September 12th, 1876), thrilled him to the marrow. The fact impressed him so strongly that he looked at his watch, noted the hour, and although he did not mention the circumstance at the time, recorded it in his note-book.

Again, Mrs. Crowe relates that on board one of her Majesty's ships lying off Portsmouth, the officers being one day at the mess-table, a young lieutenant suddenly laid down his knife and fork, pushed away his plate, and turned extremely pale. He then rose from the table, covered his face with his hands, and retired. The president of the mess, supposing him to be ill, sent to make inquiries. At first he was unwilling to reply; but on being pressed, he confessed that he had been seized by a sudden and irresistible impression that a brother he had in India was dead. "He died," said he, "on the 12th of August, at six o'clock; I am perfectly convinced of it." No argument could overthrow his conviction, which in due course of time was verified to the letter.

Events of this kind, in the minds of many, seem to point to a mysterious sympathy and harmony between two personalities, while others explain them as simply the result of "fancy and coincidence." Any one, it is argued,* may fall into a brown study, and emerge from it with a stare and the notion that he heard his name spoken. That is the part of fancy, and the simultaneous event, death, is the part of coincidence. Against this it will always be argued that these coincidences are too many to be accidental, and this position will, says a writer in the "Daily News," always be met by efforts to weaken the evidence for each individual case, and so to reduce the cumulative evidence to nothing. Taking into consideration, however, the countless instances which are on record of this kind—many too on evidence beyond impeachment—we must, whilst giving them the credence they deserve, honestly admit they are beyond the limits of human explanation.

Again, the wraith, or spectral appearance of a person shortly to die, is an object of belief in this country as well as abroad. In Ireland these apparitions are called "fetches," in Cumberland "swarths," and in Yorkshire "waffs."

Popular omens of death are innumerable. One, perhaps, which is more fully believed in than any other, is the "death-watch." This, although known to be caused by a certain beetle, belonging to the timber-boring genus, *Anobium*, is the cause of fear to many who have a given notion that—

"The solemn death-watch clicks the hour of death."

This superstition is mentioned by Baxter, in his "World of Spirits," which obtained currency for its belief upwards of a century. He says:—"There are many things that ignorance causeth multitudes to take for prodigies. I have had many discreet friends that have been affrighted with the noise called a death-watch, whereas I have since, near three years ago, oft found by trial that it is a noise made upon paper by a little nimble, running worm, just like a louse, but whiter and quicker, and it is most usually behind a paper pasted to a wall, especially to wainscot; and it is seldom if ever heard but in the heat of summer." It is generally agreed by entomologists to be the call of these insects to one another, which is caused in the following way:—"The insect raises itself upon its hind legs, with the body somewhat inclined, and beats its head with great force upon the surface near it, and its strokes are so powerful as to make a considerable noise. In Lancashire, we are informed that the death-tick must only tick three times on each occasion.

Another almost equally popular omen of death is the howling of a dog at night—a very old superstition, and not confined to our own country. It is mentioned by Virgil in allusion to the Roman misfortunes in the Pharsalic war; and Pausanias relates how, before the destruction of the Messenians, the dogs set up a fiercer howling than at other times. According to a quaint German idea, if a dog howls looking downwards it portends a death, but if upwards, then a recovery from sickness. Shakespeare includes the howling of the dog among omens. Thus, in 3 Henry VI (v. 6), the king says:—

"The owl shriek'd at thy birth, an evil sign;
The night-crow cried, aboding luckless time;
Dogs howl'd, and hideous tempests shook down trees."

* "Daily News" Sept. 12th, 1876.

It is curious how even an uneducated person could suppose that things which God, in His merciful providence, has hidden from mortal gaze, should be revealed to objects of the lower creation. Mrs. Latham, in her "West Sussex Superstitions," recorded in the "Folk-Lore Record" (i. 56), says that no slight consternation was caused at Worthing a few years ago by a Newfoundland dog, the property of a clergyman in the neighbourhood, lying down on the steps of a house and howling piteously, refusing to be driven away. As soon as it was known that a young lady, long an invalid, had died there, so much excitement took place that the occurrence reached the owner of the dog, who came to Worthing to inquire into the truth of it. It turned out, however, that the dog had accidentally been separated from his master in the evening, and had been seen running here and there when in search of him, and howling at the door of the stable where he put up the horse, and other places which he often visited in Worthing. It happened also that his master had been in the habit of visiting the particular house where the young lady had died, which at once accounted for the apparent mystery.

Another omen of death is the hovering of birds around a house, and their tapping against the window-pane. The crowing of the cock, too, at the dead of night is regarded as equally ominous. Mice are also said to portend death. On one occasion a poor old woman in Devonshire, when speaking about the mice in her room, exclaimed, "I pray God at a night, when I hears them running about, to keep 'em down." It is a common notion that to kill a cricket is highly unlucky. Thus Gay, in his "Pastoral Dirge," among many prognostications of death, gives the following:—

"And shrilling crickets in the chimney cried."

In the North of England a swallow flying down the chimney is very ominous; while in most places the breaking of a looking-glass is a certain forerunner of death. Among the countless other superstitions associated with man's decease may be mentioned one prevalent in Lancashire, where it is believed that to build, or even to rebuild, a house, is always fatal to one member of the family—generally to the one who may have been the principal promoter in wishing for the building or alteration. Fires and candles afford presages of death—coffins flying out of the former, and winding-sheets guttering down the latter. A Sussex piece of folk-lore tells us that if the church clock strikes twelve while a hymn is being sung in the morning service, a death will most surely follow during the following week.

High spirits have been considered a presage of death, a notion alluded to by Shakespeare in "Romeo and Juliet" (v. 3).

"How oft, when men are at the point of death,
Have they been merry! Which their keepers call
A lightning before death."

Indeed there are numerous instances on record of this belief, which still remains a psychological question. Tytler, in his "History of Scotland," speaking of the death of King James I, says:—"On the fatal evening (Feb. 20th, 1436), the revels of the court were kept up to a late hour The prince himself appears to have been in unusually gay and cheerful spirits. He even jested, if we may believe the contemporary manuscript, about a prophecy

which had appeared that a king should that year be slain." In the evidence given at the inquest upon the bodies of four persons killed by an explosion at a firework manufactory in Bermondsey, Oct. 12th, 1849, one of the witnesses stated:—"On Friday night they were all very merry, and Mrs. B. said she feared something would happen before they went to bed, because they were so happy."

From a very early period there has existed a belief in the existence of the power of prophecy at that period which precedes death. It took its origin in the assumed fact that the soul becomes divine in the same ratio as the connection with the body is loosened. It has been urged in support of this theory that, at the hour of death, the soul is, as it were, on the confines of two worlds, and may possibly at the same moment possess a power which is both prospective and retrospective. Shakespeare, in his *Richard II.* (II. 1), makes the dying Gaunt, alluding to his nephew, the young and self-willed king, exclaim:—

"Methinks I am a prophet new inspired,
And thus, expiring, do foretell of him."

Again in *Henry IV.*, the brave Percy, when in the agonies of death, conveys the same idea in the following words:—

"O, I could prophesy,
But that the earthy and cold hand of death
Lies on my tongue."

Curious to say, this notion may be traced as far back as the time of Homer. Thus Patroclus prophesies the death of Hector (*"Iliad,"* ii. 852):—"You yourself are not destined to live long, for even now death is drawing nigh unto you, and a violent fate awaits you—about to be slain in fight by the hands of Achilles, the irreproachable son of Oacus." Again, Aristotle tells us that "the soul, when on the point of taking its departure from the body, foretells and prophesies things about to happen." Others have even sought for the foundation of this belief in the forty-ninth chapter of *Genesis*:—"And Jacob called his sons, and said, Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the last days. And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into his bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people." Whether, however, we accept this origin or not, at any rate it is very certain that the notion has existed from the earliest times, being alluded to also by Socrates, Xenophon, and Diodorus Siculus. The belief still exists in Lancashire and other parts of England.

Many families, it is said, take their special warnings of death, which assume special shapes. Thus, the ancient baronet's family of Clifton, of Clifton Hall, in Nottinghamshire, is forewarned of approaching death by a sturgeon forcing its way up the River Trent, on whose bank their mansion is situated.

Prince, in his *"Worthies of Devon,"* tells us that "there is a family of considerable standing, of the name of Oxenham, at South Tawton, near Okehampton, of which this strange and wonderful thing is recorded: That at the death of any of them, a bird with a white breast is seen for a while fluttering about their beds, and then suddenly to vanish away."

Family omens of this kind are very common; and it is unfortunate that the great majority of them have been transmitted to us without the particulars that

gave rise to them. In most cases it is impossible to find any connection between the omen and the family.

The superstitions associated with death are so extensive that a good-sized volume might be written on this deeply-interesting subject. In the present paper I have therefore only been able to lay before the reader a brief description of some of the most well-known ones; but these are sufficient to show their general character. They are valuable in so far as they illustrate the ideas of our fellow-creatures as that solemn and inexpressibly sacred moment which soon must overtake us all; and when it comes may it find us ready!

T. F. THISELTON DYER.

Where there's a Will there's a Way.

THOUGH troubles perplex you,
Dishearten and vex you,
Retarding your progress in sombre array;
To shirk them with terror
Is surely an error,
For where there's a will there's a way.

The task may be teasing,
The duty unpleasing,
But he who confronts it will soon win the day;
Half the battle is over
When once we discover
That where there's a will there's a way.

Misfortunes uncounted
Are often surmounted,
If only we quit not the field in dismay;
Then one more endeavour,
Remembering ever
That where there's a will there's a way.

S. E. G.

The Empty Cup.

"Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful; and the end of that mirth is heaviness."—*Proverbs* XIV. 13.

WHAT is this joy so near akin to sadness,
This laughter ringing in the midst of woe,
This mirth which seems at last a passing madness?
Answer, strange human heart, if thou dost know.

From store of worldly pleasure daily rifled,
From luxuries that failed to satisfy,
From pomp and pride that would the thought have stifled,
Unquenchable, there came the heart's reply.

It is the husk when corn might well be given,
It is the empty cup that fools would drain,
It is this earth put in the place of heaven,
In vain—in vain.

A. E. G.

DRESDEN.



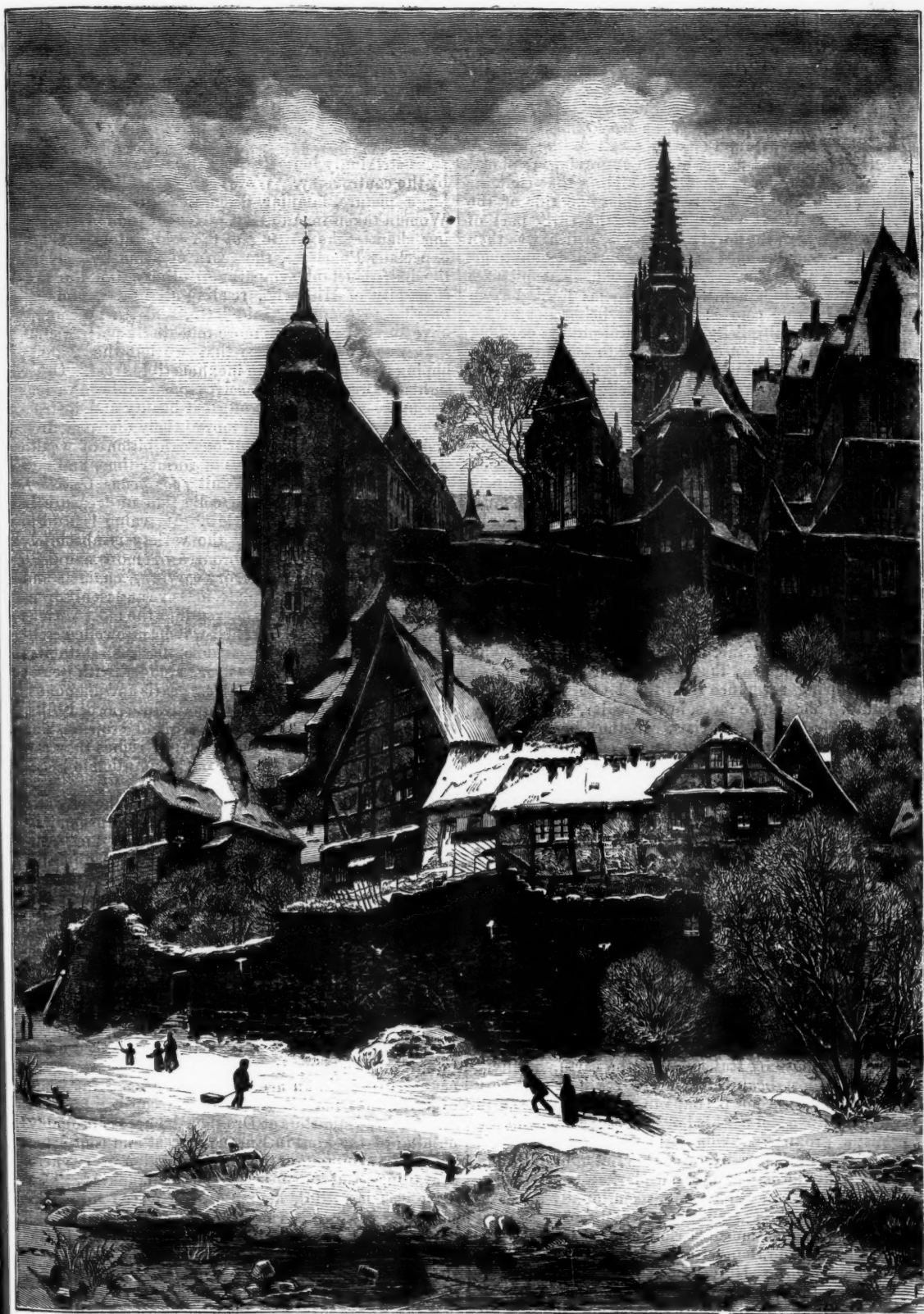
BRIDGE OVER THE ELBE.

A SHORT railway journey took us from Leipzig to Dresden, traversing first the great plain where, in October, 1813, the army of Napoleon was not so much defeated as overwhelmed by the forces of Austria, Russia, and Prussia, after three days' tremendous and sanguinary conflict. The Germans called the battle of Leipzig the *Völkerschlacht*, the "Conflict of Nations." A small iron obelisk marks the spot where the three sovereigns, who had rolled back the tide of invasion from Eastern Europe, met at the close of the memorable struggle. Few other monuments of the battle remain, save the tombs of one and another warrior in village churches, and the mounds that cover the nameless dead.

There are two lines to Dresden, one of them passing Meissen, an old town on the Elbe, where the "Dresden china" manufacture was first introduced, and is still carried on at the Royal Porcelain Manufactory—a place well worth visiting. The Albrechtsburg, the castle which commands the town from a rocky height, long the residence of the Saxon princes, has recently been restored. Beside it stands the cathedral, the finest Gothic church in Saxony, with a tower and spire 254 feet high. It was long the burial-place of the Saxon princes, whose monumental brasses are many of them exquisitely wrought, among them being Ernest and Albert, the heroes of the *Prinzenraub*, so graphically related by Carlyle. A "Descent from the Cross," by L. Cranach, in the Princes Chapel, introduces the portrait of Martin Luther!

From the tower of the cathedral the view of the valley of the Elbe is magnificent.

Dresden is in many respects one of the most attractive cities of Europe. Its external aspect is striking, especially when viewed from the bridge which separates the Old from the New Town. The Elbe rushes swiftly by. Towards the right towers the Roman Catholic cathedral, or court church (*Hofkirche*), with its heavy and somewhat ungraceful Italian ornamentation; and beyond is the great pile of the palace buildings; while, farther still, but out of sight in our view, is the imposing theatre; on the left a flight of steps leads to the Brühl Terrace, a charming promenade commanding the river, behind which is seen the dome of the *Frauenkirche* (Our Lady's Church), where the national or Lutheran form of worship is now celebrated. For Saxony is remarkable in this, that while the royal family is Roman Catholic the people are Protestant. There is a mutual understanding to tolerate each other, although it cannot be said that the situation is accepted on either side without some uneasiness. In the upper part of the Old Town is the English church, with a pretty spire, the gift of the Goschen family. On the Sunday which we spent in the city there was a large congregation, made up to a great extent of residents, and of the young people who have come to Dresden for education. No city on the Continent offers greater facilities to English pupils of both sexes; and in none is there an "English quarter" more largely in-



MEISSEN: CATHEDRAL AND ALBERT'S TOWER.

habited by families who have been drawn hither partly by the economy of living, which here is possible, and partly by the artistic and literary attractions of the place.

For, as every one knows, the glory of Dresden is in its art-galleries. These we may not attempt to describe: it would only be to catalogue a series of world-famous pictures, which in engraving or photograph are familiar to all. The building that contains the chief of these treasures occupies one side of the *Zwinger*, or Great Court, built in the early part of last century, in the florid rococo style, which was then the taste, and designed as the forecourt of a sumptuous palace, which was never completed. The pictures are arranged in a long series of rooms lighted from above with side courts: the effect being not to bewilder by a multiplicity of beautiful objects crowded upon the sight at once, but rather to carry the spectator on from one part of the collection to another, with ever-fresh wonder and delight. We went first, as perhaps every visitor does on his earliest visit, to the cabinet where hangs, alone, the masterpiece of Raphael, the *Madonna di San Sisto*. After all that has been said and written on this incomparable picture, it would be impertinent here to dwell upon its beauties; only I must say what thousands of spectators have no doubt felt before, that, however we may recoil from the associations of mistaken reverence and false worship which have attached to the Virgin Mother as here portrayed, none can resist the exquisite appealing beauty of the child-faces that look upon us from the canvas—whether of the Holy Babe, who, if a painter can portray the Divine, is so depicted here, or of the cherub countenances that gaze upwards with simple and adoring reverence from the lower part of the picture. These two faces, in particular, seem to defy the efforts of all copyists, whether by painting, engraving, or photography, to reproduce.

Before other world-famous pictures, also, we were fain to linger. There is the *Nocturne of Correggio*, where, in wondrous arrangement of light and shade, the manger of Bethlehem is illuminated, as by the glory of the Divine Child, while the dawn breaks over the Eastern hills. Here, too, by the same artist, is the small but lovely *Reclining Magdalen*, one of the most perfect pictures ever painted. Masterpieces of Paul Veronese are here—the *Adoration of the Magi*, the *Marriage at Cana*, and the *Supper at Emmaus*. Titian's *Tribute Money* is also in one of the cabinets, surely the noblest representation of the Saviour to which art has ever yet attained. A multitude of pictures, of lower aim than these great, but, after all, inadequate efforts to represent the Divine, hang around them on the walls, some painful and revolting, some, like those by Rubens, "of the earth, earthy," but many most beautiful. Van Dyck has his lordly portraits, though not perhaps in such number as in Munich; Ruysdael has his landscapes; Teniers his too realistic groups of village boors. Holbein, Van Eyck, Albert Dürer, Gerard Dow, Rembrandt, and other great German painters are largely represented: the white horse of Wouvermans continually appears. Nor are the chief Italian artists absent. Besides those already mentioned, Carlo Dolce is here with his *St. Cecilia*, Guido Reni with an *Ecce Homo*, Leonardo da Vinci with a *Holy Family*; not to enumerate others of equal or scarcely inferior name. A few of the moderns, also, are worthy to be mentioned with these great masters; although it must be confessed

that, as a whole, the galleries devoted to the later schools of art are disappointing.

We were interested by a very elaborate painting of Julius Hübner, representing the disputation between Luther and Dr. Eck, at Leipsic, in 1519. The principal figures here are grandly delineated, while the attitude and expression of the listeners on both sides strikingly indicate the various passions aroused by the controversy. We were also much moved by a large picture, familiar through engraving, of *The Woman taken in Adultery*. Her attitude of crouching shame—the bearing of the cold, intolerant, and expectant Pharisees, the scorn of some bystanders, the half-reluctant sympathy of others, and the gracious pity of Him who, reading all hearts, and forbearing to condemn, said "Go, and sin no more," have surely never been more touchingly portrayed.

It was with reluctance that we left the gallery, hoping to return, as to an inexhaustible feast. Other sights of Dresden, in themselves remarkable on various accounts—some, indeed, of great beauty and instructiveness—had to be much more briefly dispatched.

Among them was the curious exhibition of wealth stored up by Saxon princes of former time, and now collected in the Green Vault (*das grüne Gewölbe*). Probably there is no such collection of treasure in Europe brought into one view. Its value is said to amount to millions; and the variety is absolutely dazzling. First we see bronzes of most exquisite finish, then innumerable ivory carvings, enamels and mosaics; gold and silver plate, massive and richly ornamented; precious stones carved into the most various and fantastic shapes, jewelled watches, jewelled goblets, jewelled portraits; groups, figures, statuettes wrought in fine gold and silver, studded with gems; with emeralds, sapphires, rubies, pearls and diamonds, set in chains and collars, wrought into sword-hilts, and artistically combined in a royal crown. The riches, in truth, defy description; if riches they can be called that lie idly there from generation to generation.

Other collections and museums of the city we must pass by—although the Historical Museum, or Armoury, is also in its way wonderfully fine, containing as it does a collection of weapons offensive and defensive from the ages of chivalry to the present time, not only for war, but for the tournament and the chase. The collection of firearms, in particular, from the rudest matchlock of the fifteenth century to the finished rifle of our own times, is very noticeable.

But if any one wishes to obtain a vivid impression of what war has become in our own time, nothing can be better than a visit to the barracks, which occupy an elevated spot overlooking the Elbe at a little distance north-east of the city. Range after range of stately buildings—a town in themselves—seem capacious enough to contain an army, yet they are not too large even for that portion of the Saxon contingent which finds its head-quarters at Dresden. There is probably nothing of the kind in Europe so vast and complete; it is but a symptom of the tacit conviction everywhere prevailing that force is master of mankind. The drive was beautiful, among wood-covered hills, and slopes covered with vineyards, with the swift Elbe below and glimpses of the "Saxon Switzerland" in the distance. Crossing by a ferry, we re-entered Dresden by the Great Garden (*Grosse Garten*), or rather, park—for it may here be noted, once for all, that the "gardens," without which no large German town would be complete, are almost always what we

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understand by parks, there being often few or no flowers, but walks, shaded by trees, and open lawns.

This of Dresden is peculiarly beautiful, occupying about three hundred acres, and forming a pleasant resort for the inhabitants of all classes. There are restaurants and cafés at intervals; and in summer a band plays here regularly, as at watering-places and holiday resorts in England. The numbers of people that we meet, strolling in family groups or seated in temperate enjoyment on a summer's evening round the cafés, is a pleasant sight to see; and, I am bound to add, that although the favourite beverage at such

times and places seems to be the beer of the country, in the tall, cylindrical, foaming glasses which soon become so familiar to the sight, there is little or no apparent drunkenness. On the evening of a holiday I have met thousands enjoying themselves in this way, and have not seen one the worse for liquor. There is food for reflection here in all who desire the well-being of our own people.*

* From "Pictures from the German Fatherland, drawn with Pen and Pencil." By the Rev. S. Green, D.D. Just issued by the Religious Tract Society, 56, Paternoster Row.

THE FRENCH FUNDS.

IT may startle many readers to be told that the French Five per Cent. Funds have experienced all the variations in price between the figures of 7 and 126 per cent. The chart we give shows the remarkable changes which have occurred under the varying alternations of Republican, Monarchical, and Imperial rule.

The French Funded Debt may be considered to date from August, 1793, when the "Grand Livre de la Dette Publique" was instituted, and all State indebtedness was consolidated into one stock, bearing the uniform rate of five per cent. France at this time was in the throes of financial embarrassment. Less than five years previously the maladministration and excesses of the Court party had culminated in the overthrow of the monarchy, and the establishment of a succession of nondescript Governments. The various financial expedients resorted to had dragged down the credit of the country to the lowest ebb. The seizure of ecclesiastical property in the winter of 1789, the subsequent issue of bills of credit (*Assignats*) secured on that property, and the feeling of insecurity, not alone of estate but even of life itself, had completely disorganised all departments of trade. The silver plate belonging to the churches had been appropriated for coinage purposes, but as fast as it was issued the hard cash leaked out of the country or was hoarded, and the assignat practically became the only real currency in use. This paper-money became so depreciated that at one period the franc in silver was valued at 400 francs in assignats, or, for the sake of comparison, we may say that a loaf of bread worth a silver shilling could only be purchased by payment of a £20 bank-note. The drain upon the resources of the country for the maintenance of the army and navy left no other alternative for the Government than to pay the interest on the debt in assignats, and subsequently (1798) in "bons," receivable in discharge of taxes. It was not till after September, 1800, that interest was wholly paid in coin.

In September, 1797, by a measure which was virtually a spoliation, two-thirds of the debt was entirely wiped out, and one-third only was recognised, and received interest under the title of "The Consolidated Third." The variations which followed are an interesting commentary on the events of history.

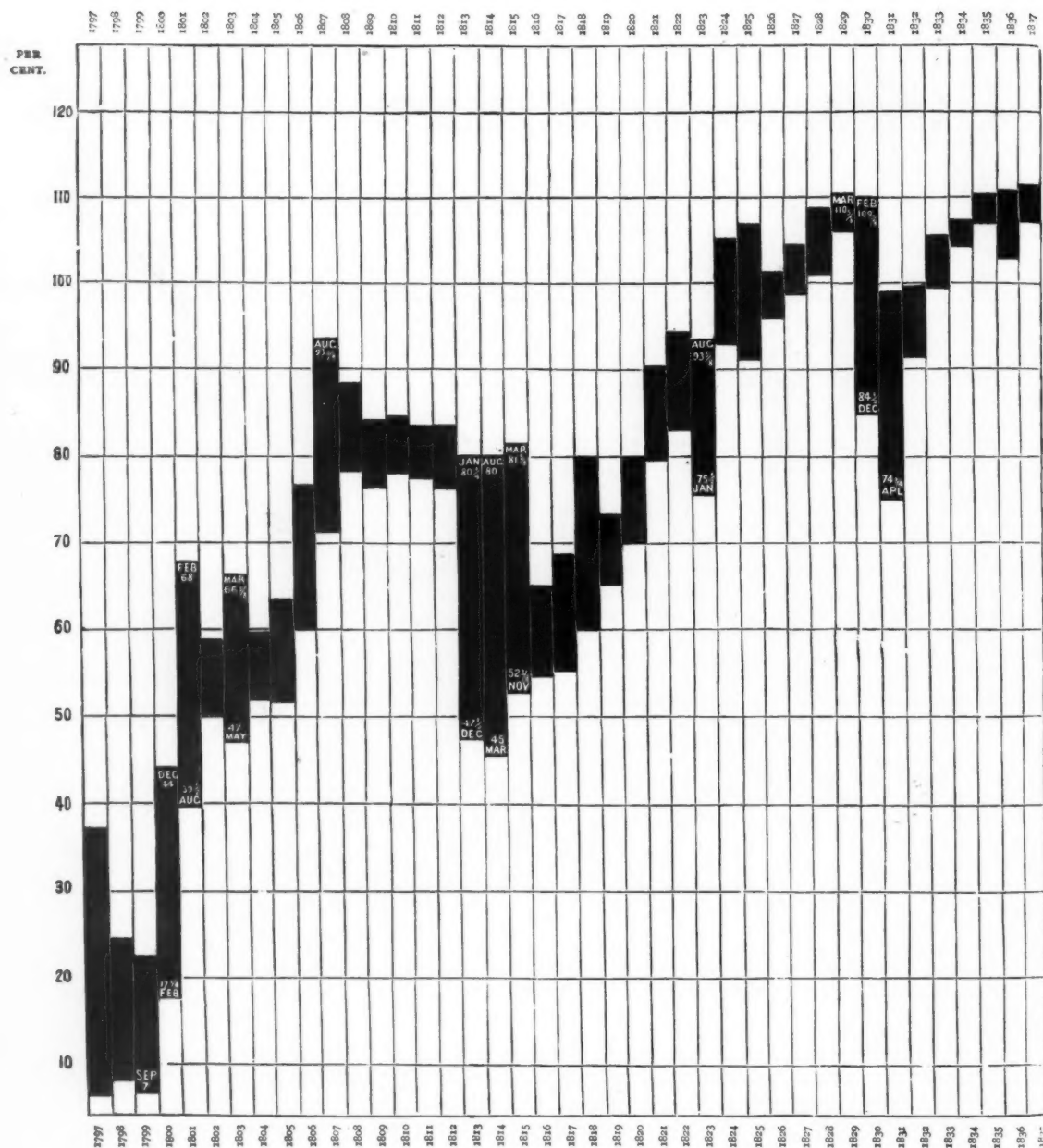
1798 witnessed (June) the expedition to Egypt, the destruction (August 1st) of the French fleet in the Nile, and the failure (October) of the French invasion of Ireland. Towards the close of the year

the interference of the Directory in military matters led to direct disregard of its orders by the more resolute commanders. 1799, early in the year, the declaration of war (March 13th) against Germany led to the coalition in April of the European Powers against France. In June the French army in Italy was compelled to beat a retreat, and the tide appeared to be everywhere overwhelming the nation in disaster. In September Rentes touched the lowest price—seven. Bonaparte suddenly returned to Paris, and speedily concerted measures for his celebrated *coup d'état* of the 18th Brumaire (9th November). The Council of Five Hundred overthrown, was replaced by the Consulate under Bonaparte. In a few weeks the funds had risen to three times their former price, and the year closed with the overtures for peace made by Bonaparte to the King of England—rejected in 1800 (January).

Five months later (May—June) Bonaparte unexpectedly marched over the Alps. By the middle of June, consequent on the decisive battle of Marengo, he had restored French power in Italy. The battle of Hohenlinden (December) terminated the conflict in Northern Europe, and led to the conclusion of peace (February), 1801. Rentes in this month touched 68, but from this they almost continuously fell to 39½ in August. The seizure (April) of the Danish fleet by England, and the adjustment (June) of the differences between the Northern Powers and Great Britain, may have been partially the reason of this drop in price. In July the Concordat with the pope, and three months later (October 1st) the practical arrangement of peace terms with England and Russia (January, 1802), again favoured a rise. The ambitious projects of Bonaparte, evidenced by his acceptance of the Italian Presidency, prevented any further marked advance, and upon the signature of the definitive treaty of peace at Amiens (March) the price actually declined. In August Bonaparte was elected Consul for life, and further changes in the Constitution tending to Imperialism were decreed. Piedmont was annexed in September. The tone of public feeling both in England and France was continuously recriminatory throughout the whole period of the peace, and in the beginning of 1803 open preparations for the renewal of hostilities were made by both sides, culminating (March) in a warlike speech by the King of England, and the direct insult offered by the Consul to the British ambassador. In May the French seized Hanover, and also occupied Southern Italy.

THE FRENCH FUNDS.

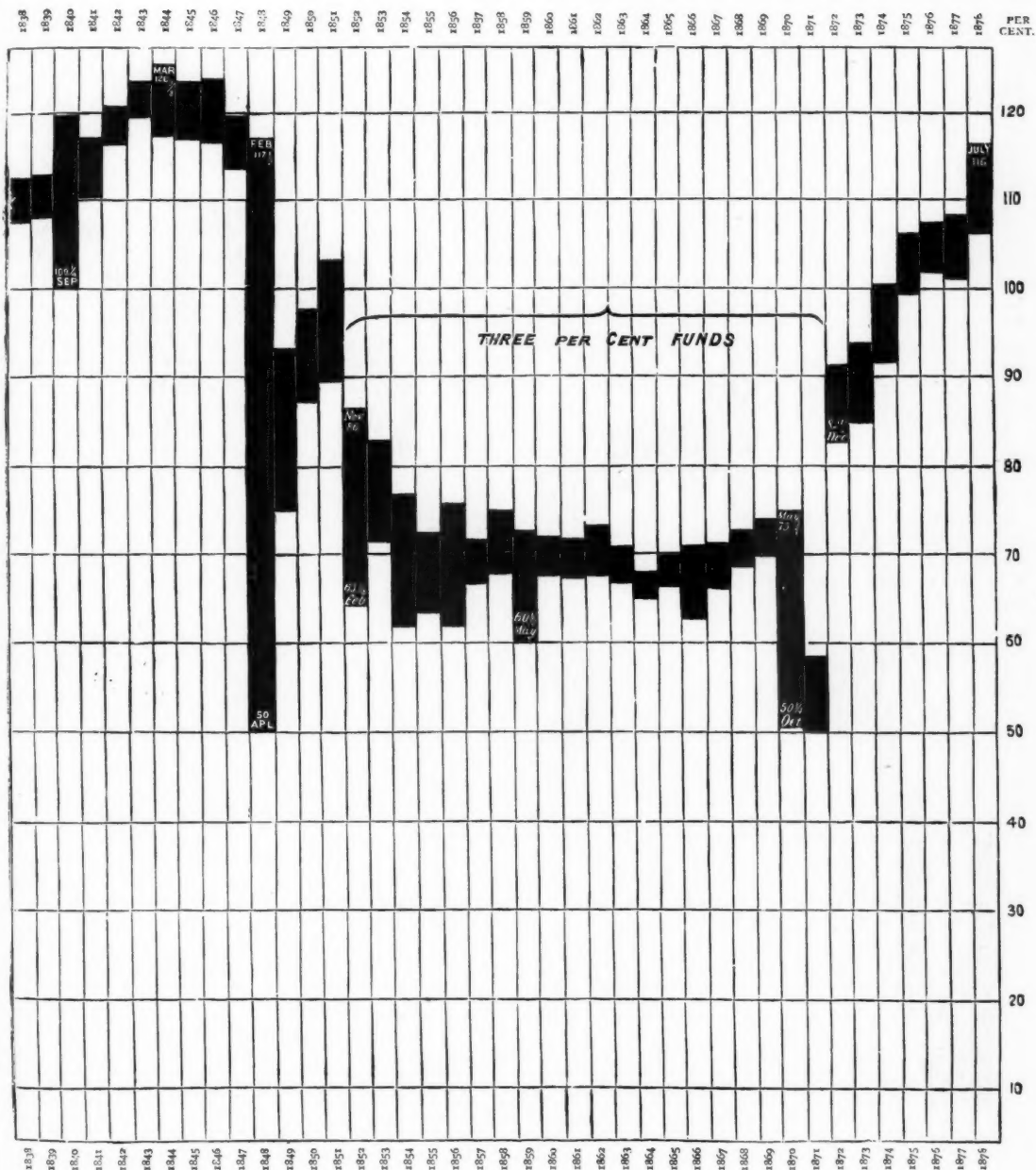
COURSE OF THE PRICE OF THE FRENCH FUNDED DEBT, 1797 TO 1837.



Each solid block shows the highest and lowest price touched in the course of the year named. The price may approximately be ascertained by reference horizontally to the figures given at the side of the chart. The prices highest and lowest in any given year can be learned by reference to the years named at the top or bottom of the chart. Thus, in the year 1830, it will be seen that the highest price was about 110 (actually 109 $\frac{3}{4}$) in February, and the lowest approximately about 85 (really 84 $\frac{1}{4}$) in December.

THE FRENCH FUNDS.

COURSE OF THE PRICE OF THE FRENCH FUNDED DEBT, 1838 TO 1878.



In 1848 the highest price touched was between 110 and 120, the actual price is shown to be 117½; the lowest point touched rests on the horizontal line 50.

From the years 1852 to 1871 inclusive the fluctuations in the price of French funds is shown by the quotation of the Three per Cents., as during that interval of time no Five per Cents. were in existence. From 1872 the price of the Five per Cents. is again resumed.

It may be mentioned that the Bank of France was established in the April of this year. It is more than probable the Government entrusted this institution with the task of keeping up the price of the funds.

In 1804 (May) Bonaparte took the title of Emperor as Napoleon I. In August the Russian ambassador left France in consequence of the barbarous execution of the Duke d'Enghien. Napoleon, as Emperor, again wrote an autograph letter, proposing peace with England (January, 1805), which was a second time rejected. In March he accepted the Italian crown, and added Genoa to France. Preparations for the invasion of England excited great attention. The defeats of the French and Spanish fleets at Ferrol (July) and Trafalgar (October), however, stultified the whole project. In disgust the Emperor again turned to Central Europe for new conquests, and the rapidity of his movements against Austria resulted in complete success. Ulm surrendered in October, and the French army entered Vienna (November 13th). On the 2nd of December the victory of Austerlitz led to an armistice, and three weeks later to the conclusion of a treaty of peace with Austria.

It was hoped in the early part of 1806 that the change of ministry in England might result in peace. The Confederacy of the Rhine provinces (July), followed by the precipitate action of its ministers, necessitated the advance of the French army (September) against Prussia. Subsequently Auerstadt, and the disastrous battle of Jena, completely humbled Prussia. The French army, flushed with six weeks' series of victories, entered Berlin. On war breaking out with Russia it continued its advance, and gained the victory of Pultusk (December 26th).

The opening of 1807 was marked by a slight relapse in Paris. Paris feared that the Emperor was rash in having his field of action so far away from his base. The indecisive battle of Eylau (February) frightened the Bourse, but the despondent tone soon disappeared, and Rentes continuously rose, receiving a crowning fillip on the news that the French victory at Friedland had ended the campaign against Russia, and a few days after, on the conclusion of peace (July) at Tilsit, Rentes at a fraction over 93 touched the highest price ever recorded during the First Empire. Coerced by France, the Northern Powers quarrelled with England, and Napoleon promulgated his pet Decree of Milan (December), by which British trade was intended to be annihilated. The preliminary sting of invading Portugal, in the preceding November, and the seizure by Napoleon of the Spanish crown, led to the commencement of the Peninsular campaign in 1808. Austria prepared for war in the autumn.

Infelicitous Austria! Obligated next year (1809) again to witness the entry of the French army into Vienna (May) and to be defeated at Wagram (July 6th). By August all was ended, and an ignominious peace had to be made. The French, victorious in Central Europe, were, however, less fortunate in Portugal.

1810 was without special feature. Both in this and the three following years French Rentes maintained a remarkable steadiness, how much contributed to by Government support of the market can only be conjectured.

In November the French retired from Portugal. During 1811 England and America were at war. The next year (1812) the French armies suffered re-

verses in Spain. Strained relations with Russia ended in a declaration of war (June). The French gained the victory of Borodino (7th September), and marched on Moscow. The retreat from Russian soil and the annihilation of its army were terrible disasters for France. Induced by the misfortunes of the common enemy, Prussia, in December, entered into an alliance with Russia. Napoleon spared no efforts to retrieve the position. The first month in 1813 a conscription of 350,000 men was enforced. Further reverses in Spain were succeeded by the declaration of war by Austria (August). In October the British army advanced into France, and, pressed on every side, Napoleon commenced a retreat from Dresden. The battle of Leipsic (Oct. 16-19) was followed by the break-up of the Rhine Confederation. Another conscription of 300,000 men was ordered, and additional taxes were demanded by Napoleon. But the nation was now seriously alarmed, and at length the will of the Emperor encountered opposition from the Legislature.

The negotiations for peace, carried on during the early part of 1814, were abruptly terminated March 18th (English Consols were as much affected by the disappointment as the French Rentes; in one day the British funds dropped 10 per cent.). The month ended with the entry into Paris of the allies. In a few days the restoration of the Bourbons was an accomplished fact. At this date the charge on the whole French debt was under £8,000,000 sterling per annum. Six months later the price of Rentes had recovered to the point quoted before the fall which had followed the Moscow catastrophe. This great recovery was possibly not so much due to confidence in monarchical government as to the feeling that France was protected from the ambition of an autocrat by the presence of foreign bayonets.

The Bourse is devoid of sentiment, and what might be considered a sign of the weakness of the nation was accepted by speculators as an assurance of a period of peace and recuperation. From this period of rest the nation was suddenly awakened by the unforeseen escape of Napoleon from Elba in February, 1815. The news was kept secret as long as possible, and only officially announced March 6th.

On the 20th Napoleon entered Paris. Three months after he was overthrown at Waterloo (June 18th). Two days later, on the news of the battle in Paris, Rentes at first fell (to 53). The next day they rose 2½ per cent. Further advanced 4½ per cent. on the 22nd, on the knowledge that Napoleon had abdicated, and by the end of the month had recovered to 66 per cent.

The three years, 1816, 1817, 1818, were comparatively uneventful. Several loans were raised. The industry of the nation was fostered by every available means. France greatly needed a respite from the continuous drain of men and money for foreign conquest. To say nothing of the enormous levies of both blood and treasure required for the almost uninterrupted warfare of nearly a quarter of a century, the external commerce of the country had become almost nil. Her colonies were lost, and her labourers had been taken from peaceful avocations to fill up the ever-thinning ranks of the army. The escape of Napoleon and the subsequent second invasion of France by the allies have been estimated to have cost the country 4,000,000,000 francs.

In December, 1818, French territory was completely evacuated by the allies. The expected withdrawal of foreign support produced a marked fall in the funds. During 1821-22 large sums, both in Govern-

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ment and private account, were expended on canals. The speech from the throne, in January, 1823, foreshadowed military intervention in Spain. From the lowest point (75½) touched in this month a gradual but persistent rise set in, carrying up the price to just 105. In March, 1824, the Government mooted the conversion of the Five per Cents., but without result. Charles x, an adherent of the "Divine right," aged sixty-seven, succeeded (September), after the death of Louis xviii. 1825 witnessed the creation of two new classes of French funds—the Three and the Four and a-half per Cents., the option being granted for the conversion of existing Five per Cents. into an equivalent of these lower interest-bearing Rentes. In the winter fears of a rupture with England, and the financial panic in London, had a depressing influence. Unstable ministries had no adverse effect on the price of the funds during the four succeeding years.

In 1830 occurred the Revolution of July and the flight of the King. The acceptance (August) of the throne by Louis Philippe failed to arrest the downward tendency of prices. Fluctuations of five, ten, or even fifteen per cent. a month took place from the date of the Revolution till after the middle of the following year, when a more healthy upward movement set in, and was continued almost without break up to the middle of 1840. During this period the extremes of the fluctuations in a year were less than they had before been in a month, and this notwithstanding the Belgian episode of 1831-32, the Parliamentary deadlock of 1833, the chronic riots of 1834, the fear of a war with the United States in 1835, Louis Napoleon's Strasbourg attempt (October), the death of Charles x (November), 1836, and the dispute with Switzerland in 1838. This was owing to the great inherent resources of the country. In August, 1840, Louis Napoleon landed at Boulogne, but the fall which took place in Rentes was really due to fears of a rupture with England. In October a fifth attempt to assassinate the King failed.

The passage (1842) of railway legislation, and later on (1844-48) the outlay in this class of security, had no very adverse effect on investment in the public funds. In May, 1846, Louis Napoleon escaped from Ham Prison, and in September England protested against the "Spanish marriage." The depression of 1846 and the great London panics of April and October, 1847, exercised but slight influence across the Channel. The Bank of France was somewhat embarrassed, but was relieved on the purchase from it of 50,000,000 Rentes by Russia. A three months' agitation for reform was sought to be checked, and the attempted prohibition of a reform banquet led to the memorable Revolution of 1848 (February), with a fall in the funds unprecedented in its intensity. Before the action of the Government the funds stood at 117½, a few weeks later they temporarily stood at 50. The bank stopped payment and the Bourse was closed. On the election of Louis Napoleon as President (December) a sharp rise set in. This rise continued during the first four months of the next year. In June the constant fears excited by the "Red" Republicans led to the declaration of a state of siege in Paris, causing a fall of nearly fifteen per cent. in a few days. The repetition of riots and attempted uprisings all over Europe led to extensive withdrawals of money from France. It has been estimated that foreign capital to the extent of over £20,000,000 was invested in English Consols during the first six

months of 1849. Much of this was doubtless French money. Still Rentes rose. The events of 1850 were the resumption of specie payment by the Bank of France, the quarrel between General Changarnier and the President, and the increase of the French army in consequence of the threatening attitude of Germany. The conflict between the Chambers and the President became more and more acute during the early months of 1851, and ultimately led to the *coup d'état* of December 2nd, an event which, following the precedent of the 18th Brumaire, caused a rise in the funds of about twelve per cent. In March, 1852, the Five per Cents. were extinguished by their conversion into Four and a-half per Cents. On the 28th of December preceding it was officially given out that no conversion was in contemplation. Some £145,000,000 Five per Cents. were in existence, and the conversion was estimated to save £720,000 a year. To show the movements which occurred in the twenty years from 1852 to 1871 inclusive, we have given the course of the Three per Cents. during that period.

During 1852 the funds advanced. Trade was abnormally expanded by the plethora of gold, and demand for all articles of luxury for the British colonies. The President made a tour through France and was everywhere received with enthusiasm, spontaneous or artificial we will not attempt to say. Cries of "Vive l'Empereur" were frequently heard towards the middle of the year. In October the President at Bordeaux uttered the famous saying, "L'Empire c'est la paix." A few weeks after "L'Empire" was an accomplished fact. Three per Cents. reached the highest point (November) of Louis Napoleon's régime.

The first half of 1853 passed without any special feature. Later in the year the disquieting condition of the Eastern question led to fears of a war and depression in the funds. February, 1854, witnessed a complete rupture with Russia, and the declaration of war, on the 27th of March. A loan of 250,000,000 francs had been raised in anticipation of the event some three weeks before. The progress of events required additional borrowings before the year had closed, and in December a second loan of 500,000,000 francs was easily raised, the subscriptions amounting to just 2,175,000,000, or say, about four and a-half times the required sum. The French Exhibition of 1855 was opened in May of that year. In July a third loan of 750,000,000 was required, and again the public pressed forward to subscribe. Nearly five times the amount was proffered. The fall of Sebastopol occurred in September, and a few weeks later the mediation of Austria practically ended the war, although peace was not actually proclaimed till March, 1856. After the conclusion of the treaty some coolness arose between England and France as to the interpretation of some of its clauses. The general elections of January, 1857, passed off quietly. The great panic in London (November) had but a slight effect. 1858 was featureless, except the feverish state of Northern Italy, wretchedly governed by Austria. The Emperor of the French addressed some sharp words to the Austrian ambassador at the New Year's levée, January, 1859, and the year consequently opened with a fear of war. By April the French army had occupied Sardinia, and after the battles of Magenta and Solferino (June), peace was concluded. This short campaign necessitated a further loan of 500,000,000 raised in May.

In 1860 a policy of free trade was inaugurated. A feeling of distrust of France prevailed in this country, and to allay this disquietude the Emperor wrote a letter to the British ambassador (July). On February 17, 1861, happened the failure of Mirès, a loan contractor and speculator on a large scale. Notwithstanding the embarrassed condition of the Government finances towards the close of the year, and the change in the Minister of Finance, November witnessed the highest price recorded during the year. In February, 1862, M. Fould issued his finance scheme, reducing Four and a-half per Cents. to Three per Cents., and imposing additional taxation. Later in the year some distress was felt in the manufacturing districts through the cotton famine. The Polish rebellion of 1863 caused the Emperor to propose a Congress of the Powers. This proposal fell to the ground through the refusal of England to attend. In 1864 the Danish war broke out. The Prussian military preparations early in the year, financial panic in London (May), and the outbreak of the Austro-Prussian war in June were the events of 1866. On the news of the battle of Sadowa (July 3) the Three per Cents. rose from 64½ to 70. The early part of 1867 was disquieted by the fear of a European war, happily averted by the then Lord Stanley's statesmanlike management of the "Luxembourg" question. 1868 opened with a further loan of seventeen and a-half millions sterling to cover a deficit in the Budget. Fears excited in the early months of 1869 of another Luxembourg question were allayed by a pacific arrangement.

The events of 1870 are too recent to require dwelling upon. The declaration of war with Germany took place in July. Six weeks later France was practically crushed, and the Empire had ceased. Loans of over £60,000,000 sterling were cast into the abyss of destruction. About £50,000,000 of this was issued in August at issue price 60½ (about). Another £10,000,000 was issued late in London as a Six per Cent. Loan. 1871 saw the entry of the Germans into Paris (January), and the ratification, on the last day in February, of the agreement to pay a war indemnity of over £200,000,000. In March the Communist outbreak commenced. The restoration of order (May 28) permitted the Government to turn its attention to the financial requirements. In June, a Five per Cent. Loan for £80,000,000 was issued at 82½ per cent. A year after a further £120,000,000 was floated with *éclat*. The liberation of French territory under the masterly administration of M. Thiers, the overthrow of that statesman, the establishment of the Septennate under Marshal McMahon, and the subsequent intrigues and conflicts of parties, form another chapter of history full of interest. French Rentes have this year reached the highest point ever attained under Republican Government. It will be seen from the diagram that the price is only brought down to 1878. Owing to the exigencies of space the article has been delayed some months.

On a comparison of the French and English funds one is struck with the coincidence of the larger the debt the steadier the price of the funds. When the whole French indebtedness was but tens of millions the price was low and subject to violent fluctuation. Now that it is above a thousand millions sterling the loans keep a high level with steadiness.

R. R. MABSON.

Varieties.

RAILWAY BRAKES.—It is not uncommon at present to see carriages fitted with two different forms of continuous brake for use on the different lines on which they are destined to travel; it is almost equally common to see both these forms rendered practically useless because the carriage in question is attached to a train whose other vehicles are fitted with neither form of brake. Such a spectacle illustrates at once the difficulty of the whole subject, the impotence of the Board of Trade, the obstinacy of the railway companies, and the insecurity of the travelling public. The question cannot, in fact, be allowed to rest where it is. The railway companies have so far resisted the mild persuasion of the Board of Trade; if they resist much longer, they will either have to justify their action very much more completely than they have hitherto attempted to do, or to submit to a compulsion rendered necessary by their own neglect alone.—*Times*.

"WARDS IN CHANCERY."—A curious discussion took place concerning the picture thus named in the Royal Academy Exhibition. A critic had pointed out the error of making the judge appear robed under the circumstances. Mr. Morgan justified himself as to the robing, but a conclusive letter came from "A Chancery Barrister" in the "Times" as follows:—"There may be some reason in Mr. Morgan's having represented his judge in robes, but there can be none whatever for representing him in robes which such a judge would never have worn. If the artist had thought it worth while to acquaint himself with his facts before painting his picture, he would have ascertained that a Chancery Judge does not wear the full-bottomed wig, except on extraordinary occasions, and never wears a scarlet robe." It may be useful to artists to know that an article on judicial costume, by one long officially connected with the Courts, appeared in the "Leisure Hour" for 1877, p. 707 (No. 1350). They will find there much authentic information not readily to be gathered elsewhere.

POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANKS.—From Parliamentary papers it appears that the amount of interest which accrued in 1879 on securities standing to the credit of the Post Office Savings Banks was £1,067,858. The amount of interest paid and credited to depositors, of expenses incurred during the year, and of the sum reserved to provide against depreciation in the value of the securities, was £942,513, leaving a balance of £125,345. On the other hand, while the amount of interest accrued on securities standing to the credit of the Fund for Friendly Societies was £7,075, the amount of interest paid and credited to trustees of these societies was £56,865, showing a deficit of £49,790; and while the interest accrued on securities standing to the credit of the Fund for Trustee Savings Banks was £1,328,653, the amount of interest paid and credited was £1,411,256, leaving a deficit of £72,603.

PAST SINS.—"Tis one thing to have our sins worn away from the memory, and quite another thing to have them washed away at the gospel fountain.—*A. Fuller*.

PALESTINE AND GREECE.—There is one history, and that the most touching and profound of all, I mean the history of the human soul in its relations with its Maker, the history of its sin, and grief, and death, and of the way of its recovery to life and hope and to enduring joy. For the achievements of eloquence and for the enchantments of wit, for the exercises of strength and skill, for the imperial games of politics and war, let us seek them on the shores of Greece. But if the first among the problems of life be how to solve the balance of our inward being, how to show man the God who made him and in whose great hand he stands, then let us make our search elsewhere. All the wonders of the Greek civilisation leaped together are less wonderful than is the single book of Psalms. Palestine was weak, always trodden down beneath the feet of imperious masters. Greece for a thousand years repelled every invader from her shores, and when at last she felt the resistless grasp of the masters of all the world, them, too, at the very moment of her subjugation she subdued by her literature, her arts, and her manners. Palestine had no share of the glories of our race. They blaze out on every page of the history of Greece with an overpowering splendour. Greece had valour, policy, renown, genius, wisdom, wit—she had all, in a word, that this world could give her; but the flowers of Paradise, which blossom thinly, blossomed in Palestine alone.—*Mr. Gladstone*.